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ABSTRACT

This is the third in a series of four booklets describing the Child Development Associate (CDA) Project at the California State College in Pennsylvania, one of the 13 original CDA pilot programs. This booklet describes a self-assessment program to be used as a stimulus for the development of a training plan and includes the following sections: pre-assessment and initial training; on-going development of training plan; implementation of a training plan; documentation of competence; final assessment; and a sample training plan. (SB)

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TRAVELING TOWARD COMPETENCE

The California State College

Child Development Associate Project

BOOKLET III: DOCUMENTATION AND ASSESSMENT OF COMPETENCE – A PERSONALIZED APPROACH

PS 009235

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California, Pa.

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PS009235

To the California State College Child Development Associate Field Site Supervisors

This set of booklets is dedicated with great appreciation and affection to the ten field site supervisors of the California State College CDA Program. This group of individuals has been continuously involved with the project since its beginning, first as trainees and then as field site supervisors. Their involvement has been characterized by great commitment, determination, flexibility, and purpose. They, more than anyone else, have directed the course of the project and shaped its philosophy. My thanks to

Sally Aber	*Loretta Hogans*
Beverly Altman	*Joanne Mujwit*
Judy Daly	*Ilene Reed*
Betty Duritsa	*Bob Sumner*
Ann Gaydos	*Regina Young*

The California State College

Child Development Associate Project

BOOKLET III: DOCUMENTATION AND ASSESSMENT

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The CDA pilot project reported herein was performed pursuant to a grant from the U. S. Office of Child Development, Department of Health, Education and Welfare. However, the opinions and recommendations expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the U. S. Office of Child Development, and no official endorsement by the U. S. Office of Child Development should be inferred.

To travel towards competence in one's own style is exciting. To assess one's self and to have that self assessment valued by a trainer is rewarding. To build upward from already developed skills and already learned knowledge is stimulating. The California State College Child Development Associate Pilot has incorporated excitement, reward and stimulation into its design for training and documentation. Together the trainee and trainer find appropriate avenues for traveling towards competence. They use the problem-solving cycle as the vehicle through which they develop an ongoing training plan. The training plan becomes the road map used as the trainee begins to explore new areas. The portfolio of documentation developed by the trainee is the log of exploration on the road to competence. This booklet will explain how ongoing assessment is the stimulus for the development of a training plan and its documentation. Finally, the assessment procedures developed by the CDA Consortium will be discussed.

PRE-ASSESSMENT AND THE INITIAL TRAINING PLAN

Competency-based training is built on the premise that competencies must be demonstrated in behavior. In order for a competency-based training program to be successful, the trainee should have lasting behavioral changes. Our experience has shown us that behavioral changes are not prolonged unless they are valued by the trainee. Therefore, a trainee must come to her/his own decision about her/his needs for training. One way of achieving t..is is through self-assessment. Being able to assess one's self accurately is a difficult skill. The California, Pa. CDA pilot offers some structure to aid trainees in self-assessment. The initial assessment provides the trainee with an opportunity to assess her/himself in all of the competencies used in the CDA Program. Several procedures are used by the California pilot. Glenn Nimnicht while at Far West Lab developed an assessment technique which asks trainees to assess competencies valued and competencies demonstrated and to rank them in a heirarchy. With this procedure one can't "cop out" by rating her/himself either high or low in the majority of competencies. Scores must be distributed on an established basis. One is literally forced to make some decisions about one's self.

To interpret this self-assessment, the scores of competencies that are valued are compared with the scores of the competencies demonstrated. Sometimes the scores are very close. Our experience has shown us that the ability to accurately assess one's self comes with security about what one is doing. Surprisingly, trainees with the least training and experience most often show the greatest amount of consistency in the scores on the self-assessment. This, we believe, is because they really don't know themselves as teachers. On the other hand, teachers with more experience, a broader knowledge base, and a deeper understanding of self often show

that they demonstrate. For example, one trainee highly valued helping children to express themselves creatively in a variety of media. She felt, though, that she was not demonstrating competence in that area. This discrepancy of value and demonstration offered a basis for discussion at the initial meeting between the trainee and field site supervisor.* The scores alone though do not dictate the direction of the training. Sometimes during discussions, it becomes clear that the trainee does not want to work on the competency, or group of related competencies that are identified as being valued highly and not sufficiently demonstrated. If this is the case, the trainer should follow the lead of the trainee. Again, trainees who are inexperienced seem to have the most trouble focusing on a problem area. When this occurs our strategy is to offer educational encounters which will stimulate thinking and be a catalyst for conflict in the trainee. From this conflict, problems are recognized and we are able to enter the problem-solving cycle and begin a training plan. It is important to emphasize that even when the trainee does not immediately find a problem to focus on, the field site supervisor does not impose a training plan.

Another technique in self-assessment has been developed at California State College. In this procedure the trainee rates her/himself on three dimensions: competency possession, personal value rating, and the probable program impact that a change would generate. Again, the results of the assessment are analyzed with the trainee and a beginning point for training is selected. Usually, a trainee begins working in an area s/he values highly, feels the need to improve in, and believes that improvement or change would make impact on the program.

The clinical judgment of the trainer is important throughout the process. The trainer may not agree that the trainee should begin work on a particular competency. It is essential though that the trainer respect the trainee's self-evaluation and allow the trainee to accept responsibility for her/his own learning. The initial assessment and conference offer a springboard from which to begin training.

The Child Development Associate competencies are grouped into thirteen functional areas. (See functional areas chart.) The functional areas are the pivot around which the training plans revolve. We have found that more creativity occurs when training is geared towards a functional area rather than a specific competency statement. After the trainer and trainee have selected a functional area to work in, a comprehensive assessment of that area is made. (See chart for Functional Area Pre-Assessment.) During a conference between the trainer and trainee an analysis is made of what indicators of competence and barriers to competence are identifiable. This is an important step because of our effort to build on what is already known and demonstrated by the trainee. The functional area is looked at in terms of the following competency indicators.

A. Planning — How is the trainee planning?

B. Organizing — How is the trainee organizing time, space, available staff and equipment to the best advantage in the functional area?

*The terms field site supervisor and trainer are used interchangeably in this booklet.

the plans s/he has made?

D. Evaluating – How is the trainee evaluating the outcomes for children of her/his planning, organizing and teaching?

Each one of these divisions is further scrutinized. How is competence being demonstrated, and what are the barriers?

A. Knowledge – Does the trainee have enough knowledge to plan, organize, implement and evaluate?

B. Skills – Does the trainee have the skills necessary to be competent?

C. Clear Values – Is the trainee clear on what s/he values for the children?

D. Teaching Philosophy – Does the trainee have a clear teaching philosophy? What are her/his goals for that functional area?

E. Practical Influencing Factors – What are the outside forces aiding or barring the demonstration of competence?

F. Security – Is the trainee secure enough about her/himself to allow change?

G. Commitment – Is the trainee making the necessary time and energy commitments in this functional area?

On occasion, a trainer and trainee may accurately assess barriers without the formality of this procedure.

The trainee mentioned previously who began her work in the functional area of creative felt that she lacked a knowledge base that was essential for her. She and her field site supervisor agreed that gaining basic knowledge would be a good place to begin. The trainee and trainer continued the problem-solving process and wrote objectives which would facilitate achievement of the stated goals.

There are some guidelines to the pre-assessment step that can be made by the California State College Program based upon its experience.

A. The purpose of this step is to understand the problems and the assets at work in this functional area. This is not the time to be generating solutions to problems. First, seek to understand the problem; you will then be more likely to be working on the real problems.

B. It is as important to identify what the person can now do (indicators of competence) as it is to identify barriers to competence. Constant focus on weaknesses and problems can be defeating. A good training plan builds and documents strengths as well as eliminates barriers to competence.

C. The role of the field site supervisor in this step is to develop as complete an understanding as possible of where the trainee is in her/his development in this functional area. It is inappropriate to evaluate, criticize or give advice during this process. Listening actively to both the content and the feeling underlying the trainee's self analysis is the appropriate role of the field site supervisor.

D. This process assumes active involvement of the trainee at every step. I once observed a group of field site supervisors trying to

they realized with some amusement how fruitless such an activity can be when the teacher herself was not even present. The trainee must be involved.

DEFINITIONS OF 13 FUNCTIONAL AREAS

1. Safe – Candidate provides a safe environment by taking necessary measures to avoid or reduce accidents.
2. Healthy – Candidate provides a clean, sanitary environment free of factors which contribute to illness.
3. Environment – Candidate arranges the room and selects materials to provide an environment conducive to learning.
4. Physical – Candidate helps children understand their bodies and provides activities to develop their large and small muscles.
5. Cognitive – Candidate stimulates thinking and provides problem-solving activities appropriate for the developmental level of each child.
6. Language – Candidate helps children acquire and use language so they can communicate their thoughts and understand the thoughts of others.
7. Creative – Candidate provides a variety of media which encourage children to express their creative abilities.
8. Self-Concept – Candidate helps children know and appreciate themselves and their needs.
9. Individual Strength – Candidate helps children develop a sense of independence and acquire the ability to express, understand and control their feelings.
10. Social – Candidate helps the children get along with others and develop a feeling of mutual respect for other children in the group.
11. Group Management – Candidate provides a positive and relaxed routine and establishes simple rules for the group which the children understand and accept.
12. Home Center – Candidate establishes positive and productive relationship with parents and encourages them to participate in the center's activities.
13. Staff – Candidate communicates with other staff members concerning activities, policies, rules, programs and plans about the performance and health of the children.

Field Site Supervisor _____

	Knowledge	Skills	Clear Values	Teaching Philosophy	Practical Influencing Factors	Security	Commitment
Planning							
Organizing							
Implementing/ Teaching							
Evaluating							

	Clear Values	Teaching Philosophy	Practical Influencing Factors	Security	Commitment

It may seen advantageous at this point to develop a complete training plan for the functional area under consideration. This sometimes works for some trainees assuming flexibility is maintained to change the plan if necessary.

However, we have found that the best training plans evolve more naturally over time. It is our suggestion to initially choose from among the problems or barriers to competence one or two of which will form the initial training plan. The criteria used to select the initial problems to tackle are as varying as the individual trainees themselves. However, some alternative suggested criteria are:

A. Choose the problem most urgent to the trainee.
B. Choose the simplest problem to overcome so that you can build on success.
C. Choose the problem that when solved will make the greatest difference in overall competence.
D. Choose the problem that could best utilize the trainee's existing strengths.
E. Choose problems most in line with a trainee's stage of development.

Again, clinical judgment is necessary to most effectively decide which criteria or combination of criteria to use in which instances. However, it is always inappropriate to plan further training in areas where the trainee is already competent. It is also usually unsuccessful to plan training in areas where the trainee **thinks** s/he is competent, even if the field site supervisor disagrees.

Once the initial barriers to competence are overcome, the trainer and trainee choose other barriers to competence to approach. Usually by this time motivation and self confidence are high because real positive growth changes have occurred.

What comprises a training plan? The training plan model developed at California State College consists of six parts: rationale for change, goals, objectives, strategies, documentation, and resources. To further explain the development of a training plan, a comparison of the process of development and the product might be helpful. This outline assumes that a few barriers to competence already have been chosen to begin dealing with.

A. Trainer and trainee write a rationale for change, defining the problem and explaining why changes are deemed necessary.	A. The Rationale
B. Trainer and trainee set a goal which is a positive re-statement of the problem or barrier.	B. Goal Statement
C. Trainer and trainee write some beginning objectives for the trainee to meet to reach the goal. When appropriate, trainee shares these objectives with anyone who would be affected by the objectives. Based on the feedback of others, these objectives could be revised.	C. Objectives
D. A group meets to brainstorm on possible approaches or strategies to achieve the objectives. The group may be just the trainer and trainee, but where possible should include others who are affected by the proposed changes. From the many suggested strategies, the trainee chooses those s/he would like to implement.	D. List of Chosen Strategies
E. The trainer and trainee now brainstorm on possible ways to document the outcomes of the chosen strategies. The trainee chooses those ways that seem to best fit her/his learning style and interests.	E. Documentation
F. The trainer and trainee share responsibility for selecting resources to help in the attainment of the objectives.	F. List of Resources

Although these steps occur in every training plan, the order in which they occur may vary.

IMPLEMENTATION OF TRAINING PLAN

At this point, the trainee begins to implement the training plan. Usually it is helpful if the trainer and trainee develop a time line for the completion of certain strategies. It is at this step that the trainee assumes greatest responsibility. It is the role of the field site supervisor to lend support but only to functionally assist in ways outlined in the training plan. For example, the field site supervisor might model behavior or observe and give feedback to the trainee.

A training plan for a particular functional area is considered completed

has been documented. This may take one week of concentrated effort or it may take a series of objectives over several months. Of course, when it is implemented over a long period of time other areas of training occur simultaneously.

A trainee may complete several objectives in a particular functional area and decide not to pursue that area any further at the present. Again, it is important to respect the trainee's evaluation of the situation and move on to an area more vital to the trainee at that time. Chances are high that the trainee will return to complete the area when s/he feels the need.

DOCUMENTATION OF COMPETENCE

As a trainee is traveling towards competence s/he collects and develops products of the training. These products are her/his documentation of competence. As an artist chooses work which best represents her/his style and skill for a professional portfolio, so does the candidate. The responsibility for the development of the portfolio is entirely up to the candidate. Choosing what best documents her/his competence is in the hands of the trainee.

The CDA portfolio includes a variety of types of documentation. For example, a trainee who has worked diligently to become competent in an area will have the products of the ongoing training plan to use in that area. In areas where fewer problems exist the trainee may gather statements explaining what s/he has done in the past to gain competence, and what s/he is presently doing to demonstrate competence. The variety of types of documentation is multitudinous. Following is a partial list of ways to document.

Types of Documentation

1. Pre and Post assessments
2. Autobiography
3. Observations
    a. of children by CDA trainee
    b. of staff members by CDA trainee
    c. of other centers by CDA trainee
    d. of CDA trainee by trainer, other person
    e. of CDA trainee by CDA trainee (viewing a video tape)
4. Records
    a. of children's growth developmentally
    b. anecdotal
    c. case histories
    d. daily logs or journals
    e. photographs

a. of program
b. of lessons
c. of meetings (parent, staff)

6. Reports of academic progress
   a. bibliographies
   b. checklists
   c. lists
   d. evaluations
   e. outlines
   f. files of activities
   g. letters of recommendation
   h. explanations of in-service, workshops, lectures, classes
   i. audio tapes
   j. video tapes
   k. written philosophy

In the CSC-CDA training model, the trainee takes increasing responsibility for the type and amount of documentation as s/he grows more familiar with the concepts of CDA, the functional areas, and this new style of traveling toward competence.

FINAL ASSESSMENT: THE CDA CONSORTIUM PROCESS

In March 1975, the Child Development Associate Consortium Board of Directors sanctioned an assessment process for the CDA-CBT effort. The procedure involves a team whose task it is to assess the competence of a trainee. The team is made up of four voting members: the trainee, the trainer, the parent/community representative, and a CDA Consortium representative. Each member of the team has a unique perspective from which to view the assessment.

The **Candidate** has a personal subjective perspective on his or her performance with children.

The **Trainer** has knowledge of the candidate's professional development and experience with young children. The trainer is also well versed in child development and early childhood educational practices.

The **Parent/Community Representative** is knowledgeable both about the community the candidate serves and about the center in which the candidate is being assessed.

The **Consortium Representative** has thorough knowledge of the rules and regulations governing the assessment process. S/he also has experience in center-based programs with three to five-year olds and an academic background in early childhood education/child development.

The team members observe the trainee, fill out appropriate forms to complete their duties to the team, and participate at a group meeting. During the group meeting all team members share all information gathered

about the candidate. The candidate's portfolio is examined. The team members review each functional area and vote whether the candidate is "competent" or "needs more training". Finally, an overall vote is taken. Assuming all procedures have been followed legally, at the close of the meeting the candidate knows whether or not s/he will be awarded the CDA credential.

In preparation for the CDA final assessment, trainees at the California CDA Pilot participate in mini-assessments upon the completion of a functional area. The mini-assessments offer the team members, other than the CDA Consortium representative, the chance to gain information about the competence of the candidate. Specific behavioral indicators of competence are required to substantiate statements about the candidate's competence. These mini-assessments offer the team members opportunities to practice skills that will be needed at the final meeting. The trainee practices self-assessment and self-affirmation. The trainer has practice in assessing. The parent/community representative gets to know the educational and specific CDA terminology that is used by other team members. The mini-assessments bring closure to the work in a functional area.

SAMPLE TRAINING PLAN

The training plan that follows is the actual work of CDA trainee Sylvia Jeffers. In the development of her plan, Mrs. Jeffers was supported and assisted by her field site supervisor, Sally Aber. I would like to thank Sylvia and Sally for allowing this material to be reproduced and for spending time with me to explain the sequence of processes and products that emerged as Sylvia traveled the road to competence in the functional area of creative.

Sylvia Jeffers, an aide in the Seton Hill College full day Head Start Program located in Greensburg, Pa., began her CDA experience by completing the Nimnicht Initial Assessment Activity. Her scores suggested that she valued the competencies dealing with the functional area of creative and felt inadequate in her demonstration of competence. The functional area of creative includes competencies in art, music, and dramatic play. At the initial conference between Mrs. Aber and Mrs. Jeffers, the latter noted that she was "having trouble" in the art area. Having observed negative responses from the younger children to her planned art activities, Sylvia knew that something was not right. She sensed the importance of providing opportunities for the children to express personal creativitiy without frustration but did not know how to provide those activities.

Her lessons were very product oriented. She noted that the older four's and the five-year olds enjoyed the activities. However, the three's and younger four's could not complete them to her expectations. Consequently, the children lost interest and eventually wandered away from the art room. Sylvia said that she wanted to know more about what to expect from each group of children. Because Sylvia was able to focus so clearly on a specific area of need, the functional area pre-assessment was skipped.

Sylvia's first objective was to learn about art for young children from a developmental point of view. For her first assignment Sylvia read from

four, and five year-old children in use of art materials. She started a collection of children's art expressions to support the outline. After learning what three, four, and five year-olds are like, Sylvia began to develop goals for children's art. Concurrently, her philosophy or rationale emerged. One of her products follows.

BEHAVIORAL OBJECTIVE: Sylvia will list goals for three, four, and five year-old children in light of her readings, outlines, and experiences in presenting art activities for children.

BEHAVIORAL OBJECTIVE: Sylvia will write her rationale for art activities for three, four, and five year-old children.

SYLVIA'S PRODUCT: Goals in Art For Threes, Fours, and Fives

The three year old needs:

1. **to manipulate a variety of art materials; he should experience a variety of art media (scissors, paint, brushes — several sizes, clay crayons, chalk, paste).**
2. **to experience the usage of all colors.**
3. **to experience the changes that occur with cutting and tearing.**
4. **to feel genuine pride and pleasure in his creations.**
5. **to be able to express his emotions through art.**

The four year old needs:

1. **to experience a large variety of art media (more than the threes).**
2. **to create more definite art forms in painting and drawings.**
3. **to create simple constructions.**
4. **to use scissors not just for cutting but for inventing.**
5. **to begin representational drawing and painting (also begins making human figure).**
6. **to feel genuine pride and pleasure in his creations.**
7. **to be able to express his emotions through art.**

The five year old needs:

1. **to experience a wide range of art media (more than the threes, and fours).**
2. **to create constructions and mobiles that stand by themselves and exhibit balance.**
3. **to combine forms (especially with clay).**
4. **to exhibit some pre-planning in his paintings and drawings.**
5. **to show thoughtful selection of art materials.**
6. **to feel genuine pride and pleasure in his creations.**
7. **to be able to express his emotion through art.**

Why does John always end up with a brown blob? He is five years old and should be painting in a more constructive manner. What's wrong with these children? Don't they know how to use scissors? Why does my group dislike stringing macaroni so much? These were my common questions and frustrations whenever I presented an art project. However, through my readings, observations, and experimentation, I have answered my questions and overcome my sense of failure. I can deal with John now, because I realize there are developmental stages a pre-schooler advances through in art. My children do not know how to use scissors well because they are three year olds and do not yet possess the fine small muscle co-ordination I see in the five year olds. My group dislikes stringing macaroni because I expect them to work too quickly and with more skill than they possess. Each child can succeed on his own developmental level. A five year old may be creating on the three year old level and a four year old may be working on the five year old's level. I must recognize these children and respect them for expressing themselves on their own level. I have the responsibility of presenting a project in which all pre-schoolers can work together and succeed because they feel no pressure, criticism or competition from other children or more important, from the teacher.

Pressure, criticism, and competition are key words for me. I have discovered that it is best never to present a model made by the teacher to guide the children. This model pressures the group to produce beyond their capabilities. This also encourages copying which inhibits their freedom to create. I have also learned that gentle guidance and positive reinforcement are far better than ten minutes of directions and demonstration. To say to a child "do it this way" really means "your work isn't what I want". This criticism can squelch a child's interest and enthusiasm. Also, it is vital to positively reinforce each child's creation. Rather than simply stating, "I like it," comment on the color scheme or design. Never, never compare one child's work to another child's. This fosters competition which can be also destructive at this age.

All children need to manipulate art materials and have genuine freedom to express themselves. This means it is the teacher's responsibility to provide a great variety of art experiences. For example, let's look at scissors. A three year old does have difficulty manipulating scissors. However, he does enjoy simple cutting for the pleasure of cutting. Therefore, you do not expect him to make intricate snowflakes or paper/fabric collages. Reserve these activities for the children on more advanced developmental levels. Each child needs to paint with all types of objects. He needs to cut, to paste, to draw with crayons, chalk, charcoal, paint and magic markers. But the teacher must keep the developmental stages in mind when she plans the project. I quickly discovered that flexibility in planning is important for both teacher and child. If I plan a project with paint and sponges, I must be flexible enough to see that Mary wants and needs to mix the paint on her paper with her hands. This flexibility means that Mary is learning and enjoying this experience. It also means that I do not become frustrated because Mary prefers not to use the sponges as I had planned.

In my opinion, art is one of the most beautiful and necessary of all

happiness, his anger, and his pride. Art permits the child to say – "Hey, I did this myself. Isn't it great?" The child has the power to change the shape or form of an object and to splash color where there once was just whiteness. In a child's art work, you can see change, growth and thus learning. And isn't that what teaching is supposed to be all about?

Sylvia proceeded to the stage of planning for children – always looking to the children for her evaluation of the success of the activity. She then asked to be observed according to her own guidelines.

BEHAVIORAL OBJECTIVE: Sylvia will prepare art activities during her week in the creative room which will support children's developmental needs. She will observe and record the children's responses in terms of the previously prepared outline.

BEHAVIORAL OBJECTIVE: Sylvia will design an observation guide. She will present art activities while an observer uses the guide.

Sample of Sylvia's Lesson Plans.

NAME: Sylvia Jeffers **GROUP: Older Fours**

WEEK OF: Feb. 24, 1975

DAY 1

GOALS – The children will be able to:

1. **explore and experiment with the primary colors.**
2. **discover what colors they create by combining the primary colors.**
3. **understand the differences between shades of one color by adding the color white.**

Materials needed:

1. **red, yellow, blue paint (preferably powder tempera mixed with liquid detergent).**
2. **4 Q-tips for each paint cup.**
3. **lots of paper**
4. **white paint and small paint brushes.**

Strategy:

Provide red, yellow, and blue paint for each table. Explain that these are "special" colors called primary colors. Give them paper and see if they discover why these colors are special. Let them work with Q-tips as a new experience. Then, specifically ask the group to combine certain colors. Let them work on their own for a while, trying out their new discoveries. Add white paint to the table. Mix the white with each primary color and ask the group what happens. Give each child paint brushes (these are easier for mixing) and let them experiment. Listen for the words lighter, pink, different, etc.

Q-TIP PAINTING

Robin (5) – holds Q-tip without difficulty, wide circular movements, mixes colors especially white with darker colors. She concludes that red plus white make pink. She makes use of all the colors and creates new colors through mixing.

Conclusions: She possesses the co-ordination of a five year old. However, she enjoys mixing colors to create new colors as a three year old would enjoy.

Adam (5) – makes a crisscross design then places colors along side one another, very pleased with his creation.

Conclusions: He is working on the five year old level showing skill with materials, definite planning and careful thought in his work.

Eddie (4) – ease in the manipulation of the Q-tip, makes outline of human figure, mixes colors together out of curiosity. He uses the swab not only to make lines but he also uses the tip to make large dots.

Conclusions: He has the skill and co-ordination of a five year old.

Kim (4) – makes dots and dabs then mixes all the colors together on top of one another, wants to cover entire sheet with paint, much experimentation with colors, wants to paint her fingers.

Conclusions: She is still functioning on the level of a three year old. However, her attention span was 30 minutes which shows she is moving into the four year old level. She is sloppier and less co-ordinated than the five's and older four's, yet she enjoys manipulating her materials and labels her creation.

Becky (4) – doesn't mix colors but places masses of color beside one another. She tries all the colors and makes figures instead of just random painting. She thinks carefully about what color she wants to use.

Conclusions: She is a good example of a four year old working at the four year old level. She is more selective and definitive in her work.

Are directions and instructions kept at a necessary minimum?	X		"Put water on your paper." "Sprinkle the paint on." "This is water – add some more paint."
Does the teacher seem well prepared?			Replaced water as needed.
enough paper	X		Papers on floor for drying.
enough paint	X		Cans of paint on tables.
washing bucket	X		Names on paper after child done.
group protected	X		
tables protected	X		
Does the teacher offer positive reinforcement?	X		"Oh, Eddie – a beautiful color. How did you make that?" "You made swirls!"
Does the teacher touch-up or redo the child's work?		X	Touched water on paper but not redo.
Does the teacher put emphasis on the finished product?		X	Even though Michael's paper was very wet she allowed him to work beyond the saving point for the paper.
Is there enough room at the table for each child to work freely?	X		Small tables used so limit of two children per table.
Is the child free to sit or stand to make himself comfortable?	X		Allowed the child to sit or stand.
Are the materials within easy reach?	X		Cans of paint and squirt bottle of water at each table.
Were the children free to manipulate materials?	X		Children could squirt, sprinkle, and mix over and over.
Did the children have adequate time for this activity?	X		No pressure to be done. Five-minute clean-up warning. Suggested to Eddie, "Would you like to finish up?"
Did the children share the art materials?	X		Enough to go around without pressure.
Did the children enjoy this activity? If not, was an alternate activity available?	X		Children very absorbed and conversational. Children allowed to choose to come to activity from play area.
Is this a valid activity for each developmental level?	X		Each child free to manipulate materials.
Can each child feel successful?	X		Michael interested in lots of water. Amy more aware of what her hands do. She gives instructions to Michael!
Is the atmosphere a friendly and encouraging one?	X		Teacher engaged in conversation with the children to make them aware of the colors they were using. Children conversational with each other also.

implemented them, she took advantage of visits from her field site supervisor.

Following is a sample of an observation prepared by her supervisor.

OBSERVATION:

Functional Area: Creative

Situation: Creative room arranged for six children at a time to draw with black crayon and over-paint with orange. Materials are available for children. As one child finishes and goes to bucket to wash, Sylvia puts out paper for a new child, then goes to the next room to invite a child to the creative area. As each child comes to the table, she explains, "Here is paper and black crayon for you to draw with. Then you may paint with the orange paint." As each child sits, she writes the child's name on the paper.

Consequences: There was ample room for each child to work and plenty of materials ready. Additional paint was supplied as needed. The efforts differed according to the abilities and developmental level of each child. Sylvia accepted each effort as valid.

Interpretation: The activity was prepared ahead of time. The number of children limited so as not to be frustrating for either child or teacher. Each child was "introduced" to the activitiy but not instructed as to what to draw. The idea of Halloween was reinforced but not limiting. Children of different age and developmental levels could succeed and feel competent at the activity.

Included in the realm of creative is the area of music. This was more difficult for Sylvia to begin working on. For this area Sylvia and Sally completed a functional area pre-assessment.

At a training conference Sylvia confessed to Sally her discomfort with singing. She had been told that she didn't have a "good" voice, and as a consequence never sang. To make the area of music more manageable it was broken down to a) spontaneous music, b) music during free play, c) music during transition time, and d) music during small groups. Sylvia assessed what type of music was used during each of these times and evaluated her competence in providing musical experiences.

Trainee Sylvia Jeffers

PRE-ASSESSMENT
FUNCTIONAL AREA Creative – Music

Competency Indicators (+
Competency Barriers (–

Field Site Supervisor Sally Aber

	Knowledge	Skills	Clear Values	Teaching Philosophy	Practical Influencing Factors	Security	Commitment
	A B C D	A B C D	A B C D	A B C D	A B C D	A B C D	A B C D
Planning	– + + + (some but need more)	– + + +	– + + +	– + + +	+ + + +	– + – +	+ + + +
Organizing	– + + +	– + + +	– + + +	– + + +	+ + + +	– + + +	+ + + +
Implementing/ Teaching	– + + +	– + + +	– + + –	– + + –	+ + + +	– + – –	+ + + +
Evaluating	– + + +	– + + +	– + + –	– + + +	+ + + +	+ + + +	+ + + +

A – Spontaneous Music (games)
B – During free play
C – Transitional
D – Small group

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PRE-ASSESSMENT
FUNCTIONAL AREA Creative – Music

Competency Indicators (+)
Competency Barriers (–)

	Clear Values	Teaching Philosophy	Practical Influencing Factors	Security	Commitment
	A B C D	A B C D	A B C D	A B C D	A B C D
	– + + +	– + + +	+ + + +	– + – +	+ + + +
	– + + +	– + + +	+ + + +	– + + +	+ + + +
	– + + –	– + + –	+ + + +	– + – –	+ + + +
	– + + –	– + + +	+ + + +	+ + + +	+ + + +

C – Transitional
D – Small group

about music. She evaluated the reading and developed a list of goals for children. To achieve these goals she also developed guidelines for a teacher. Following is the series of objectives that Sylvia achieved in the area of music.

BEHAVIORAL OBJECTIVE: Sylvia will read from several sources and prepare an outline of goals for children in the music program.

BEHAVIORAL OBJECTIVE: Sylvia will prepare guidelines for persons working with three, four, and five year-old children in music.

BEHAVIORAL OBJECTIVE: Sylvia will define the types of music experiences that children in the center have including in the definition the importance of each experience for children.

BEHAVIORAL OBJECTIVE: Sylvia will observe planned music periods. She will write a summary of the activities in light of the goals for children previously written.

BEHAVIORAL OBJECTIVE: Sylvia will plan, carry out, and evaluate music activities for a group of children.

Sally had developed with Sylvia an open and supportive relationship. One day Sally received a phone call from her trainee. During her time in the housekeeping corner Sylvia became concerned about the characters being played by the children. The children were imitating their favorite T.V. heroes. Often they were unlikable, aggressive people. Sylvia wanted the children to play out positive models like Mom, Dad, police person and teacher. She could not understand the play of the children; she could not appropriately react to it. She attacked this problem from two angles simultaneously. She began to watch programs on television most frequently referred to by the children. The immediate understanding of **why** children played out the characters on T.V. was coupled with the desire to research some background information for understanding of the dramatic play impulse.

She began to observe children and to plan activities which stimulate socio-dramatic play.

BEHAVIORAL OBJECTIVE: Sylvia will read S. Smilansky's *The Effects of Socio-Dramatic Play on Disadvantaged Pre-school Children* and write a review citing examples she observes in the center which follow and support theory presented in the book.

BEHAVIORAL OBJECTIVE: Sylvia will view the filmstrip, "Play and the Player" and record notes. She will participate in a discussion of the filmstrip with other members of the staff.

BEHAVIORAL OBJECTIVE: Sylvia will choose two children to observe in a socio-dramatic play situation using her reading as background information.

BEHAVIORAL OBJECTIVE: Sylvia will list and describe several dramatic play activities she has planned and experienced with children.

regarding effects of television on children's play.

BEHAVIORAL OBJECTIVE: Sylvia will view children's television programs and write a resume of their effect on children's dramatic play. She will share the ideas resulting from her viewing with other CDA trainees.

SYLVIA'S PRODUCT: Have The Superheroes Taken Control?

Five year old Danny twists a scarf around his neck and proudly shouts, "It's Superman!" Scott races after him yelling, "Shazam to the rescue!" The boys then pulverize all bad gurp in the area, threatening all the while to "punch his face off, smash his nose down, and twist his neck to pieces." Throughout the day other Superheroes make their appearance. They are Batman and Robin, Aquaman, Wonder Woman, Evel Knievel, and the most popular of all — Steve Austin, The Six Million Dollar Man, affectionately known to the children as simply Steve.

Television, has become as common in most households as indoor plumbing. It is a prized status symbol and that fact does not come as a surprise for the television is entertainer, teacher and babysitter all rolled into one. Pre-schoolers have known TV all their lives. The tube just as any other constant environmental factor, is highly influential in shaping early social behavior.

Ever since the infamous Grand Canyon Jump, Evel Knievel is a wonder in the eyes of three, four, and five year olds and probably to people of all ages. To children, he is someone to be idolized, feared, and imitated. The block corner becomes not a place for castles and roadways, but a place to build ramps so their cars can do flips and wheelies. A Lincoln Log becomes a rocket to fly over a makeshift canyon. This is a good thing. Unknowingly, the children are learning about inclines, balance and gravity. Their imaginations are stimulated. From this comes a hundred questions about the width of a canyon, the power of rockets and the speed of motorcycles. Their vocabularies grow with words such as ramp, wheelie, jump, parachute, canyon and rocket. They also ask about the man. Some questions stem from curiosity, but the majority are out of fear. "Why doesn't Evel Knievel get killed; can he die; is he magic; why does he do such scary things?" These are difficult questions for a teacher or parent to answer. For me some of the questions are impossible to answer. Why does Evel do such scary things? The most frightening aspect of the new Evel Knievel craze is that children are trying to imitate this daredevil's stunts. In reality, they are Evel Knievel. This especially became evident to me when my five year old nephew received a new bike for his birthday. Instead of taking the bike around the block for a test drive, he built a ramp and went flying downhill onto the ramp and into the air. He landed on his face. Luckily there were no serious injuries, just lots of scrapes, bruises and a bloody lip. This accident did not scare him. For one moment he too was an amazing daredevil. The next day he tried a similar stunt and

to sail downhill Evel Knievel style. These stunts were occuring so often that mothers became watchdogs, fearful that their childrens' toys were becoming dangerous stuntmobiles. This is the true peril of Evel Knievel. The media has outrageously glorified a man who flaunts death for personal gain; a man whose luck is so extraordinary that he has become a demi-god in the eyes of children. Perhaps it is time for the media, especially television which makes the strongest impact on pre-schoolers, to explore Evel Knievel the man, rather than Evel Knievel, the death-defying daredevil.

Evel Knievel is a real person. But what about the influence of make-believe people? Saturday morning presents quite an array of imaginary heroes for the children to view. All the "superhero" type of programs have similar traits. The forces of evil threaten to destroy a group of people or gain world control so the supreme forces of good, they being the superheroes, challenge evil and eventually overcome him. The most popular shows of this type are "Shazam", and "Superfriends". The Superfriends include Superman, Batman and Robin, Aquaman and Wonder Woman. I found the shows dull and unimaginative. Humor was forced and ineffective. Dialogue was not realistic. At times, I thought the stabs at humor were in poor taste and quite offensive. In one cartoon, the evil scientists assistant was portrayed as a moronic do-nothing who had the habit of repeating everything backwards. This assistant was constantly ridiculed and harassed because of his inabilities and he was the object of supposed humor in this cartoon. I noticed that in almost every cartoon of this type there was one poor soul much like the assistant. I suppose the writers concluded that since he was an example of evil, it was perfectly justifiable to abuse this character. In my opinion, this is teaching our pre-schoolers to be wary of anyone with a disability or anyone who is slightly different in speech or intelligence. These cartoons show that it is OK to abuse and laugh at those who are "dumb".

The Superheroes themselves are perfect human specimans. Shazam is transformed from an ordinary teenage into a muscled and handsome adult with superhuman qualities. Besides extraordinary strength, these heroes exhibit kindness, generosity and a genuine respect for all living things. As models for children then, one would think them ideal! But they are not without flaws. To overcome evil, they never use brainpower, just muscle power. If a problem arises that they cannot handle, out pops a computer with an answer. For once I would enjoy seeing a hero overcome his opponent with intelligence rather than strength. I believe these programs should portray these heroes as men and women who combine intelligence and strength to withstand evil. So far, I have discussed Evel Knievel, a real person and the Superheroes who are strictly imaginary cartoon characters. However, there is one superhero left to explore. He is neither a real person nor a cartoon character. He is the most super of the Superheroes, the one idolized most by the pre-schoolers I observed. He could only be Steve Austin, the Six Million Dollar Man.

Steve Austin is a fictitious character portrayed by an actor. Perhaps this is why he is so popular. He seems more real than the cartoon figures and he is on weekly to rekindle the childrens' interest, unlike Evel Knievel who gets only occasional TV coverage. Steve Austin opened a whole new world

body are man-made, but made so perfectly and efficiently that he is supposedly the strongest man alive. These bionic parts are powered by atoms which raised a lot of interesting questions by the children. If not for Steve Austin, how many pre-schoolers would be aware of atoms and their power?

Many children are confused as to whether the Six Million Dollar Man is a real person or a make-believe character. One day a group of boys were arguing this point quite hostilely. Finally, they asked me if he was a real man. I explained that the Six Million Dollar Man was make-believe like Batman or Shazam. Many of the boys seemed dejected and I felt as if I had just destroyed the Santa Claus myth.

After watching all the programs, I just discussed, I made a very disturbing discovery. It bothered me that such dull and unimaginative TV shows were being presented to children. All have some redeeming qualities but for the most part, the shows were like soda pop without the fizz. What really frightened me was the conflict between good and evil. Good was always presented as the superhero. He was the main character. The policemen were viewed as good characters. However, they always took a back seat to the Superhero. In otherwords, evil is so strong and so horrible that an ordinary man cannot overcome it. John Doe will flounder in evil's grasp until a Superhero rescues him. It takes someone with super human qualities to conquer evil. Where does this place a child's view of the police, of his parents, of all those people he thought were protecting him? What kind of image of evil does this give the child? Who will the child select as his heroes? To me, this is the true danger of Superheroes. Superman is far stronger than anyone dreams.

Another disturbing factor is that of all the TV programs discussed, not one had a hero who was Black, Oriental or Indian. Actually, these heroes are all white and all male, except for Wonder Woman, who is also white. Where does this leave all the non-white children? How does this affect their dramatic play? I noticed that the girls seldom role play the figure of Superman. Instead they become Superman's wife or evil's victim. I think it rather sad that writers and producers permit such a lopsided view to be aired on national television where children of both sexes and of all races are exposed to a steady diet of WASP heroes.

In my observations of pre-schoolers' dramatic play, I was amazed at the frequency of Superhero role playing. Less and less did I see the policeman, father and fireman roles being chosen. Everyone, especially the boys, had become one Superhero or another. Perhaps it is the child's way of rationalizing and dealing with his fears. Let's face it. These Superheroes are frightening figures. They can fly, wear unusual costumes such as masks to hide their faces. They possess enormous strength. As a child role plays, he is coping with his fears and questions. As an imitator, he is an equal.

Aggression for these TV Superheroes is a way of life. So naturally aggression plays a part in the child's socio-dramatic play. At times, this is a beneficial thing. Sometimes the shy child who can become Steve Austin finds acceptance into his peer group. He begins to communicate even though the language is often harsh and treatening. This is a starting place for him. However, aggression in dramatic play often shows its negative side. Too many times the Superheroes destroy evil by physically abusing a

especially among the older boys, who permit no one to role play with them. Their rejection is often physically and verbally cruel. Sometimes their role playing becomes so loud or offensive that they frighten the other children. If a child repeatedly sees aggressive behavior on TV as a successful manifestation, will he become more aggressive? How does the teacher and parent control this negative aggressive behavior?

I am not sure if there are any definite solutions to the questions I've raised. I do not know how I can resolve my fears concerning the effect of TV Superheroes on childrens' social behavior. However, I do feel that parents and teachers of pre-schoolers should be aware of the positive and especially the negative sides of childrens' television. I am sure that I am not the only person who has questions and bad feelings about this dramatic play. But how does awareness happen? Perhaps through a teacher-parent meeting or publication of some type or pamphlet for general use. I do think it is time for everyone to pick and choose more carefully the TV programs for children.

Sylvia Jeffers' work is not atypical of the documentation of trainees in the California CDA pilot. It is unique, though, because Sylvia is unique. She is an individual whose depth can be explored when the opportunity is given. The training plan offered in this booklet is only a glimpse of the variety of approaches that one may take to learning. There are as many different ways to learn as there are people.

As the documentation for the functional area "creative" shows, Sylvia's travels toward competence offered her the opportunity to explore early childhood education, young children, and herself. It was indeed an exciting and successful trip.

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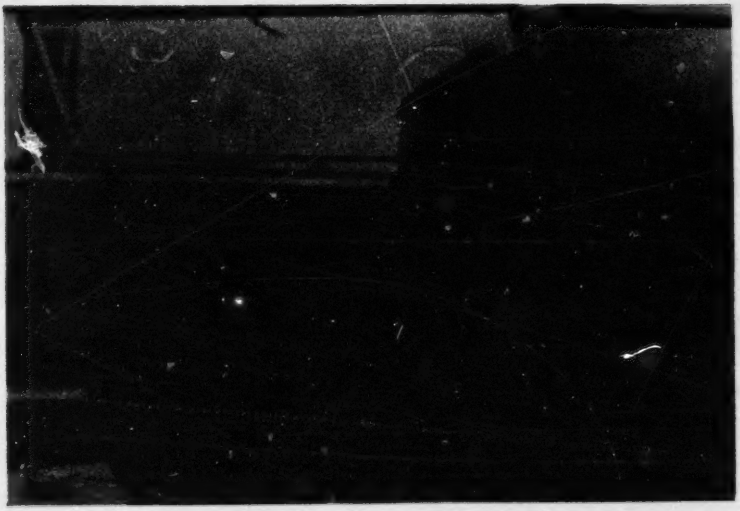

Photographs in this series of booklets by:
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